

III. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- PLEASE FIND BELOW A MARKED VERSION OF CLAIMS WITH PRESENT STATUS DELINEATED
- THE CLAIMS ARE HEREIN AMENDED, CANCELED, OR ADDED TO, SO AS TO EVENTUATE IN THE NEW SET OF PENDING CLAIMS INDICATED BELOW. THIS LISTING OF CLAIMS WILL REPLACE ALL PRIOR VERSIONS AND LISTING OF CLAIMS IN THE APPLICATION.

CLAIMS

20. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** ~~A ternary alloy of silver, copper and germanium comprising from more than 93.5 wt% to 95.5 wt% silver~~ A method of producing an alloy consisting essentially of at least 92.5 wt% Ag, from 0.5 wt% to 3 wt% germanium, 1-40 ppm of boron, optionally 0.5 wt % of any of zinc, cadmium and tin, optionally 0.1-1 wt % silicon, and the remainder, apart from impurities, copper, which alloy is resistant to the development of porosity, brittleness and sagging when heated for joining or torch annealing operations, said method comprising incorporating into the alloy more than 93.5 wt% to 95.5 wt% Ag and selecting the wherein the weight ratio of copper to germanium is be from 4:1 to 3:1.

21. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** ~~The alloy~~ method of claim 20, wherein the weight ratio of copper to germanium is about 3.5:1.

22. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** ~~The alloy~~ method of claim 20, containing from 1.0 wt% to 1.5 wt% germanium.

23. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** ~~The alloy~~ method of claim 22, wherein there is produced an alloy containing about 94.5 wt% silver, about 4.3 wt% copper, and about 1.2 wt% germanium.

24. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The alloy method of claim 20, ~~wherein there is produced an alloy containing~~ containing 5-20 ppm of boron.

25. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** A method according to claim 20 further comprising forming the alloy into a [[A]] finished or semi-finished shaped article ~~of the alloy of claim 20.~~

26. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article method of claim 25, ~~which is wherein~~ the finished or semi-finished shaped article is formed by casting.

27. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article method of claim 25, ~~which is wherein~~ the finished or semi-finished shaped article is at least partly produced from sheet or strip.

28. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article method of claim 25, ~~which is wherein~~ the finished or semi-finished shaped article is surface treated with an alkanethiol, alkyl thioglycollate, dialkyl sulfide or dialkyl disulfide.

29. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article method of claim 28, wherein the alkanethiol, alkyl thioglycollate, dialkyl sulfide or dialkyl disulfide ~~comprise~~ has C₁₂-C₂₄ alkyl groups.

30. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article method of claim 28, wherein the alkanethiol or alkylthioglycollate ~~comprise a~~ is selected from stearyl mercaptan, cetyl mercaptan (octadecyl mercaptan), stearyl thioglycollate and/or cetyl thioglycollate.

31. **(CANCELED)**